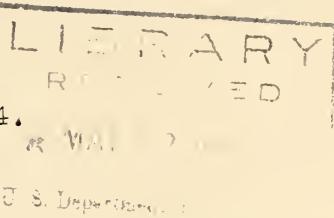


Historic, Archive Document

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.

9-132 Raw

SAFE GUARDING YOUR FOODS AND DRUGS -- No. 4.
Tuesday, March 25, 1930



A series of radio talks by W. R. M. Wharton, chief, Eastern District, Food, Drug, and Insecticide Administration, U. S. Department of Agriculture, delivered Tuesday mornings at 10 a. m. Eastern Standard Time, through WJZ, New York, and the following other stations associated with the National Broadcasting Company: KWK, St. Louis; WREN, Kansas City; KFAB, Lincoln, Nebr.; WRC, Washington; WBZA, Boston; KSTP, St. Paul; WSM, Nashville; WAPI, Birmingham; WJAX, Jacksonville; WPTF, Raleigh; WRVA, Richmond.

Good morning label readers. Before beginning my talk today I want to express appreciation to the hundreds of listeners who have written for "read label information". Your comments are encouraging and inspiring - and to the community clubs who are forming read label committees, I want to say that we stand ready to be of any possible aid to you. We have had many inquiries from women's clubs. Dozens of officers of civic clubs and community have pledged their efforts in disseminating 'read the label' facts.

My friends:- In this series of radio talks, I am relating my personal experiences in Pure Food law enforcement work. Last week, my talk covered my experiences in the Outlawing of Poisonous Colors from coffee and I told you a story about quackery. Two weeks ago I told you how to read Food and Drug labels and on the previous weeks my story covered experiences wherein a spice adulterator was caught by a new and novel method; and I told you of the sale of Table Salt at more than \$15,000 per pound.

Today, I expect to tell you about Taking Rotten Eggs Out of Bakery Cakes, and of the Rise, Decline and Fall of the Egg-Substitute Game, and more about reading labels.

Some years ago, it was the practice of a few isolated cake-baking establishments to employ rotten eggs in the manufacture of cake products. Rotten eggs! Yes, I mean it. You may ask how can this be true since the odor would be apparent in the cake. Let me tell you that baking destroys the odor, especially if a little ammonium carbonate is used in the mix.

Your present speaker was assigned to investigate this matter. I was on location in Chicago. An under-cover investigation demonstrated that a certain large bakery in the Windy City was using rotten eggs in cake-making and, sure enough, too, the bakery was employing ammonium carbonate to destroy the rotten egg odor in the finished cake.

This factory kept its doors locked - maintained a lookout and, in this way, hoped to escape the penalties of the Federal Food and Drugs Act.

A raid was planned on this plant - at midnight. It operated a night shift. Entrance was gained through a skylight, and large quantities of rotten eggs, rancid lard, and other unfit materials were seized. The next day the city newspapers emblazoned the facts of the raid - setting forth in heavy leads the finding of rotten eggs, weevily flour, and rancid lard in the plant.

The next afternoon I happened to meet one of the proprietors of the bakery on the street, and he approached me in great excitement saying: "Your pure food inspectors have ruined my business." I told him that I was not much surprised that his business had come to a standstill, after the revelations of the morning, and I expressed the opinion that perhaps his business ought to be ruined, since he was using rotten eggs in the products he manufactured. And now comes the amusing part of the story: This callous food-faker replied: "Rotten eggs! That makes not so much difference, but my business is ruined because the newspapers say I used rancid lard, and you know I am a kosher manufacturer. It's the lard that's ruined my business!"

Now, my friends, the point of this story is that the Pure Food Laws of the Nation have made such conditions, as related, now impossible. By constant detection, prosecution, and seizures, unfit materials of this kind have been eliminated from commerce and from use in manufactured products. Thus does the enforcement of the Food and Drugs Act protect your food supply, and I am glad to say that the ethical food manufacturer of today is squarely behind the enforcement officials in crushing out these scandalous practices.

A few years back at a time when eggs were reaching luxury prices, there appeared upon the shelves of the retail grocers of the land, placed there often on consignment by the "fly-by-night" egg-substitute-for-profit opportunists, a large number of products which were labeled and sold as egg substitutes. These products, and there were more than a hundred of them, were variously named, for example: "Eggoline," "Eggolet," "Really-Egg," and the like. Generally, these products were composed of cornstarch, milk casein, baking powder, and always they were artificially colored - yellow - to make them look like egg powder. Imagine calling a mixture of corn starch, baking-powder and milk casein - "Really-Egg", or "Eggeine!" The cost of the ingredients of these articles amounted to only a few cents a pound, but they were sold at exorbitant prices.

The claims made on the labels of these products were very amusing, indeed. For example - one of them which was put up in a one-pound can was labeled as being equal to eighty eggs. Another one which was put up in a fifty-pound drum was labeled as "Answering for the whites of 333-1/3 dozen eggs." It might be well to remember at this point that one pound of true Dried Egg Powder is equal to only thirty-six eggs. Now such statements - *** equal to eighty eggs, and "Answering for the Whites of 333-1/3 dozen eggs," and the names of the products, as well, were false and misleading.

These so-called egg-substitutes had only a short life - they ran counter to the Federal Food and Drugs Act - A short, serious effective seizure campaign removed these products from the market. The Courts were sympathetic, as they always are when asked to act on food fraud cases. Many, many lots of these fraudulent egg-substitutes were condemned and destroyed, and many manufacturers of them were prosecuted and fined; and these actions under the Federal Food and Drugs Act so entirely discouraged the manufacturers of so-called Egg-substitutes, as they would be expected to, that the products disappeared entirely from the market - thus removing another source of fraud from the channels of commerce.

My friends, it is through actions such as I have related that your food and drug supply is safeguarded through the medium of the enforcement of the Federal Food and Drugs Act. Nearly seventeen thousand (17,000) judgments of the Courts, printed as Notices of Judgment, represent the cold record.

Now for my Read Label pointers. I shall tell you today the meaning of tea labels, in order that you may know how to read tea labels and to permit you to insist on getting exactly what you wish to purchase when you buy tea, you may believe that tea labels tell the truth for the enforcement of the Import Tea Act and the Food and Drugs Act by the U.S. Department of Agriculture insures truthful labeling of packages of tea.

Tea is the tender immature leaves of the tea plant which are cured, either with or without fermentation, fired or dried and rolled and thus made ready for your teapot and teacup.

Now label readers there are three kinds of tea, namely, Green Tea, Semi-Fermented Tea, and Black Tea. Green tea is green in color and is cured, fired and rolled, it is not fermented. Semi-fermented tea is blackish in color, only partially fermented, and lies in color and in qualities imparted by fermentation between green tea and black tea. Black tea is black in color. It is fully fermented, and is fired and rolled.

Commercial teas come from China, Japan, Formosa, India, Java, Ceylon, and Sumatra, and when these terms are used on labels they indicate the country of origin and with respect to the last four named, the terms themselves give you information as to the kinds of tea represented. That is, India Tea, Java Tea, Ceylon Tea, and Sumatra Tea, means fully fermented black Tea from the country named.

Now with respect to these four varieties of teas, namely, India, Java, Ceylon, and Sumatra, I may say that after picking they are separated by machine into five different grades, (1) Flowery Orange Pekoe, (2) Orange Pekoe, (3) Pekoe, (4) Pekoe Souchong, and (5) Souchong. Flowery Orange Pekoe consists of the tenderest leaves taken from the tip end of the tea plant while Souchong represents the coarsest large leaf tea, the intermediate grades lying between the small and large leaf grading. Mixtures of these grades are called Orange Pekoe Blend or Pekoe and Orange Pekoe as the case may be. No selections of leaves lower on the plant than those given the Souchong grade are made since the lower leaves are too coarse to use for tea purposes. You will see, therefore, that the names "Flowery Orange Pekoe" and "Orange Pekoe" do not imply the presence of flavors or scents derived from oranges or orange blossoms, but are descriptive only of the size of the tea leaf.

There are certain trade designations applied to teas which have a definite meaning and significance and these designations are often also used on labels. They are: Kee Mun Congou. This designation applies to a very high grade of fully fermented China Black Tea Gunpowder Tea or Young Hyson Tea: both of these terms mean China green tea, unfermented. English Breakfast Tea - This designation means China black tea, fully fermented. Formosa Oolong Tea - This term means semi-fermented Formosa tea.

You may encounter the terms "panfired" and "basketfired" as well as the term "uncolored Japan" on tea labels. All of these terms means that the products are unfermented green teas of Japan. Such terms as "high altitude" tea when used on tea labels mean that the tea has been grown in high altitudes and therefore is supposed to be of high quality. The term "garden" as used in the tea trade has a reference to tea estate but it has no especial significance for the consumer.

You may buy products labeled, "Scented Teas." Such teas will be found to be mixtures of tea leaves with small amounts of dried jasamine or other flowers which give to the tea when brewed a slight odor and flavor of the flower employed.

So-called Ceremonial teas are teas grown often under shade and sometimes prepared under certain ritualistic conditions and are used by people of different nationalities for ceremonial purposes. Such teas are sometimes claimed to be picked only by virgins. Fictitious values because of sentimental factors are often placed on such teas. It having been said that some Ceremonial tea sells for \$100, per pound.

If you want to learn how to read labels, if you wish to become a careful and discriminating buyer of foods, if you wish to save money in your marketing, if you want to be prepared to discuss label reading in your community clubs, write to Mr. W. R. M. Harton, U. S. Dep't of Agriculture 201 Varick Street, New York City, for copies of his radio talks on how to read labels, and send in for interpretation any labels you do not understand.

Next week, at this hour, I shall talk about poultry cheaters and Freckle Eaters about oxaline and temperine, and I shall tell you more about how to read labels.

